

Appl. No. 10/754,323  
Amdt. dated March 11, 2010  
Reply to Office action of September 29, 2009

REMARKS

Independent claim 13, and dependent claims 2 through 4, as now amended, the only claims in the application, are virtually identical to such claims in a patent granted in the following countries:

EUROPEAN Patent No. EP 1 553 239 (Exhibit 1)

validated in:

BELGIUM (Exhibit 1a)

GERMANY (Exhibit 1b)

SPAIN (Exhibit 1c)

FRANCE (Exhibit 1d)

UNITED KINGDOM (GREAT BRITAIN) (Exhibit 1e)

ITALY (Exhibit 1f)

THE NETHERLANDS (Exhibit 1g)

POLAND (Exhibit 1h)

CHINESE Patent No. 200410081872.1 (Exhibit 2)

MEXICAN Patent No. 265668 (Exhibit 3)

RUSSIAN Patent No. 2 365 715 (Exhibit 4)

NEW ZEALAND Patent No. 536057 (Exhibit 5)

INDIAN Patent No. 227359 (Exhibit 6)

AUSTRALIAN Patent No. 2004218724 (Exhibit 7)

Patent applications with such claims are also pending in the following countries:

CANADIAN Patent Application No. 2,488,594

(Awaiting first action)

JAPANESE Patent Application No. 2005-4543:

An Examination Request was filed 1/8/2008.

We await word of further activity.

Appl. No. 10/754,323  
Amdt. dated March 11, 2010  
Reply to Office action of September 29, 2009

Copies of the granted patents are attached as Exhibits, as indicated above.

Copies of the pertinent parts of the file history of the European patent application are attached to the European Patent in Exhibit 1.

In the present application pending in the USPTO, the claims of the application were rejected in the Office Action of September 29, 2009 over Lickliter 3,675,957 and Sauer 3,746,379.

Neither Lickliter '957 nor Sauer '379 shows a locking latch with a curved portion before extending in straight line fashion, as now set forth in independent claim 10.

The present claims have been subjected to extensive review in the European Patent Office, and the patent offices of the many countries listed above, and were found to be allowable.

The arguments set forth before the EPO relating to patentability of the presently presented claims, are incorporated herein by reference.

In Lickliter '957, his locking tab 54 extends from the connector base at an angle.

Webster's Third International Dictionary defines "angle" as the figure formed by the coming together of two straight lines.

Locking tab 54 in Lickliter '957 is shown as a straight line, which intersects with base (web body 46) another straight line.

Clearly, straight locking tab 54 extends from base 46 at an angle.

Appl. No. 10/754,323  
Amdt. dated March 11, 2010  
Reply to Office action of September 29, 2009

Claim 13, corresponding to the allowed independent claim in the above referred to countries, defines the locking latch (40) (identified as a tab in Lickliter '957) as formed with a curved portion before extending in straight lever fashion.

Webster's Dictionary referred to above, defines a curve as "a bending without angles". Clearly, in the present application there is a bending of the latch as it extends away from the base of the connector, and clearly this bending is not at an intersection of two straight lines that form an angle, as shown in Lickliter '957.

Lickliter '957 has no curved portion as defined in claim 1.

The benefits of the presently claimed connector, as now claimed, are set forth at great length in the specification, including the drawings, of the present application. None of these benefits are present in the Lickliter '957 reference.

The Examiner also cites Sauer '379 as pertinent prior art in the Office Action.

In the drawings and specification of Sauer '379, at column 5, lines 51-63, and column 6, lines 1-2, it is clear that the locking latch (finger) 64 is bent along a straight fold line formed by the intersection of the flat locking latch (finger) 64 and the flat base or web body 46 of the connector. Again, as in Lickliter '957, the locking latch (finger) 64 of Sauer '379 extends from the web body 46 at an angle, and not as a curve which as referred to above, is defined as a bending without angles.

Appl. No. 10/754,323  
Amdt. dated March 11, 2010  
Reply to Office action of September 29, 2009

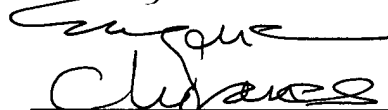
Sauer '379 does not teach or suggest the presently claimed connector, with a locking latch (40) formed with a curve portion before extending in straight lever fashion, wherein such claimed connector results in the benefits disclosed in the present specification and drawings.

In summary, in view of the numerous patents granted throughout the world with virtually the same claims as now presented in this application, and in view of the arguments made above with regard to the cited Lickliter '957 patent and the Sauer '379 patent, applicants respectfully request early reconsideration of the application and allowance of the claims.

11 March  
2010

Reg. No. 20,373  
Tel. No. (610) 667-4392  
Fax No. (61) 667-4394

Respectfully submitted,



**SIGNATURE OF PRACTITIONER**

Eugene Chovanes  
Jackson and Chovanes  
Suite 319, One Bala Plaza  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

Attachments